



Request for Qualifications – Montana Invasive Species Strategic Framework

Project Overview

Missoula County (“County”), in association with the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council (“Council”), seeks an experienced natural resource consultant to aid in the development of the Montana All-Taxa Invasive Species Strategic Framework. The purpose of this plan is to provide a roadmap and timeline with prioritized short-term and long-term actions aimed to improve coordination, increase capacity, and decrease duplication of efforts for invasive species programs across Montana. The selected consultant will work with both the County and the Council to gather and organize the information necessary for the strategic plan.

Project Background

On December 4, 2014, Montana Governor, Steve Bullock, signed Executive Order No. 13-2014, establishing the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council. The purpose of the Council is to advise the Governor on a science-based, comprehensive program to identify, prevent, eliminate, reduce and mitigate the impacts of invasive species in Montana.

The Council is composed of 21 members, appointed by the Governor from the following categories: Tribal Government Representative; County Weed District Representative; Montana State University Extension Representative; Montana Conservation District Representative; Conservation Organization Representative; Private Landowner; Natural Resource Group; Private Industry; MT Department of Natural Resources Representative; MT AIS Coordinator (MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks); MT Noxious Weed Coordinator (MT Department of Agriculture); MT Department of Transportation Representative; Hydropower Utility; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Bureau of Land Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service; U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service; U.S. National Park Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

The Council identified three priorities to accomplish in 2015-2016:

1. Conduct an independent assessment to identify gaps in Montana's invasive species programs, results of which are available at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/docs/misac-docs/montanastatewideassessmentfinal.pdf>;
2. Sponsor a Montana Invasive Species Summit in April of 2016 to engage Montana's invasive species stakeholders in a discussion of the results of the independent assessment, more information on the summit results can be found at: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/MISAC/the-governors-summit-on-invasive-species>; and



3. Develop a Montana Invasive Species Strategic Framework, using the assessment and the information gathered at the summit, to serve as a prioritized roadmap for invasive species in Montana.

This RFQ is being issued to accomplish priority 3: the Montana Invasive Species Strategic Framework. The main purpose of the plan is to develop a living document that provides a strategic framework for invasive species in Montana. Currently, there are individual invasive programs for aquatic invasive species, pests, terrestrial plants, and animals. These programs are run independently, but the state is looking to create efficiencies, improve coordination among agencies, and make overall improvements to how the state addresses invasive species issues. The strategic plan will serve as a roadmap for the implementation of the actions necessary to better coordinate invasive species efforts, reduce duplication of efforts across taxa, increase cost effectiveness and improve our capacity to better manage invasive species inside and outside of Montana's borders. In addition to providing a long-term vision for how Montana manages invasive species, the plan will include actions, responsibilities and performance measures.

Scope of Services

The County seeks a consultant with significant experience in the design and development of invasive species strategic plans. The strategic plan must contain, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

1. Review Council vision, and mission statements to gain familiarity with goals.
2. Work closely with Council committee member(s) to develop goals, short-term, and long-term actions and identify responsible entities. Review the results and make recommendations for full Council consideration at an arranged Council meeting.
3. Project kick-off meeting and routine conference calls
4. Analyze statewide assessment, Summit report, website, and other related information to identify biggest priorities and needs and to identify gaps in information.*
5. Examine and address internal and external opportunities and perceptions impacting the ability to successfully implement framework.
6. Conduct 3-4 listening sessions to collect gaps in information as deemed necessary for the project.
7. Review the organizational models of other invasive species management plans. Provide overview of those models to compare and contrast as possible benchmarks to emulate or consciously differ from.
8. Develop a sustainable financial and programmatic model to achieve goals.



9. Ensure plan meets conditions and contractual obligations set forth in funding contracts.

*Resources provided may include existing and past management plans, site visits, program reports, internal assessments, and access to multiple stakeholders including agency staff, landowners, NGOs, etc.

Organization of Strategic Plan

As noted above, this strategic plan is intended to be a management tool for invasive species managers in Montana. The plan has two main purposes. First, it provides a roadmap for invasive species managers that describes a long-term vision and overarching principles that guides invasive species management in the state. Secondly, it presents a prioritized list of goals with related actions for the next 2-5 years, as well as long-term actions beyond that timeframe.

The Council will provide the successful consultant with a detailed outline of the plan components. After reviewing several other states invasive species plans, the Council would like to follow the format of the Wisconsin Statewide Plan for Invasive Species:

<http://invasivespecies.wi.gov/initiatives/strategic-plan/>.

Project Deliverables

The resulting framework will align the Council's vision, mission, priorities, and resources. It will provide a roadmap for Montana to address the following:

- 1) What is Montana's long-term vision for invasive species management?
- 2) How will we get there—what are the long-term actions needed?
- 3) Rather than manage each taxa independently, what is the best model for Montana's invasive species management?
- 4) What actions need to be taken for improvement in the next 2-5 years?
- 5) Who is responsible for short-term and long-term actions?
- 6) What are the key performance indicators that are needed to know if improvements have happened?

The successful consultant will assist the Council in prioritizing actions and creating a series of alternative futures and a common direction to provide a more holistic invasive species management plan to successfully affect the pieces of the plan.

Project deliverables will include draft interim plans, listening session reports (if applicable), as well as a final strategic framework. The Council may create summary reports or other compendiums based off of the final



Pre-submission Questions

Any questions about this RFQ must be addressed in writing to Bryce Christiaens, Chair, MT Invasive Species Advisory Council, Bryce@missoulaeduplace.org on or before 5:00 PM, 6/16/2016. Questions must include:

1. Company name and address;
2. Contact information, including name, email address, and telephone number.
3. Clear reference to the section and item in question.

The County will provide a formal written addendum by 5:00pm, 6/16/2016 to questions received by the deadline. Any addendum will be posted on the Council's website, <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/MISAC>. An Acknowledgment of Addendum must accompany the RFQ response.

Amount Budgeted for Project
\$20,000 to \$30,000

Interim Report Date
9/9/2016

Project Completion Date
12/01/2016

RFQ Requirements

The following information must be submitted in the project proposal:

- a. Organization information. Details about the consultant including: form or organization, contact information, location of offices, and the names of principals, officers, and directors.
- b. Project proposal. A narrative addressing the scope of work and time line for the strategic plan.
- c. Background. A description of the consultant's background in the development of invasive species strategic plans
- d. Key personnel. The experience and qualifications of staff proposed to be assigned to the project.
- e. Availability. A brief statement of the availability of key personnel to be assigned to the project.
- f. Project list. List of similar/relevant projects completed by the consultant.



- g. Design and writing samples. Examples of conceptual layouts from other completed invasive species strategic plans
- h. Project budget. An overall budget with estimated cost breakdowns for project components or phases.
- i. References. Names and telephone numbers of three (3) references about the consultant's past performance, preferably on similar projects.
- j. Proposed timeline and tasks to meet project goals

RFQ Due Date and Submittal Address

Responses to this RFQ are due by 5:00PM, 6/24/2016 and should be mailed to:

Bryce Christiaens, Chair, MT Invasive Species Advisory Council
2825 Santa Fe Court
Missoula, MT 59808

The submittal package should be marked "Montana Invasive Species Strategic Plan" and contain two (2) paper copies and one (1) digital copy.

RFQ Timeline Summary

Release Date:	6/10/2016
Pre-submission questions due:	6/15/2016
Addendum response to question posted by:	6/16/2016
RFQ Due Date:	6/24/2016
Contract Awarded by:	6/30/2016
Project Completion Date:	12/01/2016

Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

The contract will be awarded to the consultant whose qualifications, experience, and cost proposal are deemed most advantageous to Council. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals:



- 1) Ability of the consultant to prepare a complete strategic plan that addresses all items in the Request for Proposals.
- 2) Experience of the consultant and project staff on similar projects.
- 3) Ability of the consultant to meet the Council's timeline for the project.
- 4) Feedback from references.
- 5) Quality of proposal including clarity and conciseness of written communication
- 6) Cost proposal.

The evaluation team may interview finalists in person or over the phone. Missoula County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.